

## New Law Will Release Schools from Federal Restraints



I often hear from educators, parents, and school administrators across Northern California that the federal government imposes too many requirements and regulations on educational aid. As a former school board member, I know firsthand the frustration of being restricted from implementing new and innovative ideas because of burdensome federal regulations. In response to these concerns, Congress recently passed the "Education Flexibility Partnership Act," better known as Ed-Flex, a new law I was proud to cosponsor and support.

Under the Ed-Flex law, schools may apply for waivers from federal regulations which the state — not the federal government — can approve. These waivers will allow teachers and administrators to spend more time educating our children and less time complying with federal forms and regulations. Parents — who often are the first and best teachers of our children — become partners in education with Ed-Flex, rather than disregarded by the Washington education bureaucracy.

Ed-Flex has a proven track record. Under a previously existing 12-state demonstration project, states as diverse as Texas, Maryland, and Ohio all utilized Ed-Flex to improve

academic performance and better utilize resources. In Texas, after only two years of implementation, preliminary statewide results on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills showed that school districts with waivers outperformed non-waiver districts in reading and math. For minority students, the improvements were even larger. Maryland used Ed-Flex authority to reduce student-teacher ratios for students with the greatest need in math and science from 25 to 1 to 12 to 1. Ohio has used Ed-Flex authority to substantially reduce paperwork for schools, school districts, and the state education agency.

With the efforts of dedicated teachers, parents, and local school boards, I am confident these outstanding results can be duplicated and even surpassed in Northern California. Ed-Flex is an important step in freeing local schools from restrictive and unnecessary rules and regulations, reducing paperwork and bureaucracy, and granting teachers and administrators the flexibility they need to meet the specific needs of their schools. As America moves into the 21st century, I look forward to working with all Northern Californians to find innovative, new ways to grant teachers and parents the tools they need to provide our children the education they deserve.



## Legislative Update

### **Congressman Herger:**

#### ✓ Voted for the "National Missile Defense Act of 1999."

This bill declares it to be the **policy of the United States to deploy a national missile defense.** North Korea, China, and Russia all have the ability to strike American soil with ballistic missiles, and rogue nations such as Libya, Iran, and Iraq are working aggressively to develop weapons of mass destruction. By making missile defense part of official U.S. defense policy, the government must work to protect American families from missile attack.

#### **Passed House and Senate.**

#### ✓ Voted for the "Water Resources Development Act,"

bringing needed federal assistance to Northern California to protect against catastrophic flooding. Included in this legislation is **\$26.6 million for flood protection efforts in Northern California.**

#### **Passed House.**

✓ Voted for H.R. 820, legislation to **dramatically boost drug interdiction efforts** by the U.S. Coast Guard, giving it **\$1.865 billion for combating drugs** over the next two years. This includes funding to operate six additional coastal patrol boats, three maritime patrol aircraft, and eight deployable pursuit boats in drug transit zones.

#### **Passed House.**

✓ Introduced the "Species Rescue Act," legislation to amend the Endangered Species Act so that **flood control levees may be repaired in a timely fashion** without compromising the sustainability of any protected species.

## Town Hall Meeting

